1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

accordingly created *four* supernatural Carpenters. They in turn made a number of workers, *Alquathotatl nanuqomaxmuly*. These beings, endowed with enormous power by *Alquntăm*, chiselled from wood a number of human beings, the forefathers of mankind. Some men state that this was done by the *four* Carpenters, but the consensus of opinion seems to be that they were merely supervisors. No explanation is given of the means used by *Alquntăm* to give life to the beings thus created. The workers made not only human bodies, but constructed their mentality, including the speech. *Nuxmăt-a* contains a large number of rooms, in each of which a different set of Indians, with a different language, was manufactured; thus is explained the diversity of tongues among the people of British Columbia. The Carpenters did not confine their attention to men and women. Supernatural beings, animals, birds, trees, flowers, fish, mountains, rivers, perhaps even moon and stars, all were created almost simultaneously by them under the direction of *Alquntăm* in *Nuxmăt-a*. The sun alone was not made in this way. *Alquntăm* chose the proper plumage or fur for each bird and animal, which the Carpenters painted and carved according to his instructions. As they provided men with different languages, so they furnished the birds and beasts with their speech, which men can no longer understand. Each was given the necessary tools for existence on the earth below; sharp incisors to beaver, strong talons to eagle, a penetrating eye to heron, and so on. The Bella Coola do not regard birds and animals as being of a lower order than themselves, for all were created by the same power, at the same time; in many respects they consider that they belong to a higher plane than human beings. *It would be too great a digression to include at this point a number of myths describing the creation, but these will be found in vol. I, chap. vi.*

Mythology does not record in detail the sending down to this earth of trees and plants or of the forefathers of all other Indian tribes; but the manner in which the first Bella Coola arrived is clearly stated. *Around the walls of Nuxmăt-a* were

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Sasq have been heard as recently as 1924 according to popular belief. In January of that year a number of young Bella Coola were returning home in a motor-boat from Ocean Falls. They camped for the night on Burke Channel, and were alarmed to hear a crashing of bushes and a beating on tree-trunks. Thoroughly frightened, they directed the beams of several electric torches in the direction of the sounds without avail and at last started the engine of their motor-boat, the noise of which frightened the *Sasq* away.

An animal somewhat similar to the *Sasq* is the *dâkwis*. The Bella Coola state that long, long ago, there lived as human beings near Port John on Evans Arm, King Island. They were a strange people, with peculiar rites including the worship of fire. Their neighbours, the Bella Bella, from whom they differed entirely, determined to destroy the *dâkwis*. A massacre took place, and only a few survivors escaped to an island in one of the lakes in the interior of King Island. Here, in course of generations, they grew hairy and lost their human characteristics; it is said that a few paintings made by them are still visible there. Not many years ago some Bella Coola saw what may have been the last surviving *dâkwis*. Two hairy creatures were observed fishing from a skin boat on Burke Channel. As soon as they realized that they were observed they dashed ashore, broke up the framework of their canoe, and plunged into the forest carrying its skin covering. Nothing more seems to be known concerning them, nor do they appear ever to have granted supernatural assistance to anyone.

Another supernatural creature is the *Âdkusî'*. It somewhat resembles a cow, although its legs are shorter and its body, which is white and hairless, is heavier. In spite of its awkward build, this animal can move so rapidly as to catch birds and animals with its tongue, which can be shot forth to a tremendous length. Various incidents are related concerning *Âdkusî'*. One of its characteristics is that it causes gales. The country where one lives is invariably denuded of underbrush and even pebbles; everything movable is blown away, leaving only trees

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ancient history and fame of his family. It is a matter connected with the past, a matter of the mind, a source of pride to him to have such a possession, but a matter that does not affect his daily life. 211 424 999

So far as could be learnt, the Bella Coola crests consist of the following birds and animals: raven, bald eagle, grizzly bear, black bear, wolf, whale, blackfish, merganser, loon, *sk!aimtsk*, possibly deer, and the mythical double-headed snake, *nuiatl*. To these must be added the sun, because some of the original people came to earth in human form by sliding down his eye-lashes, the sun-beams; and *nuhnchits*, the posts which stretched from earth to the land above, down which a number of the first ancestors of mankind swarmed in human form. The Bella Coola believe that these posts are particularly common memorials among the tribes of the outer coast. According to some accounts it was these posts which supported the first sky until it fell. 825 [796] [792] [829] [772]

A crest is connected almost exclusively with the distant past. A Bella Coola whose ancestor came to earth as a raven pays no attention to the ravens of the present time. The matter was approached from every possible angle and not the slightest sign of respect toward living specimens of a man's crest could be noticed. A query as to whether or not a man refrained from eating his crest was regarded as highly humorous. Nor is there any trace of fellowship between unrelated families even if they happen to have the same crest. The subject was broached repeatedly, until at last one informant smiled broadly and said: 424 999 825

"I know now what you want to find out, I can tell you all about it."

He requested how the Kitkatla are, in his opinion, stupid enough to regard as brothers all those who have the same animal story even if they are members of different tribes. He said that when he was a young man at Victoria, where Indians from all parts of the coast used to meet, a Kitkatla had once asked him what was his animal. He was puzzled, but as the [648]

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Raven, perhaps made conceited by this power, did not always use it for good purposes. He learnt many new inventions which he taught to the Bella Coola, but sometimes he indulged in adventures of an obscene nature. In fact, he was often too "smart." The Bella Coola relate many tales concerning his exploits. These are all mere stories, such as can be told by anyone, and they fall into two classes. One comprises humorous anecdotes, describing how Raven tried to show off, to outwit other birds and animals, and his consequent discomfiture. These belong to the realm of mythology and are recorded in vol. II, chap. v. In addition, there are stories describing the inventions and boons obtained by Raven; these are given in detail here as the only satisfactory means of illustrating the attitude of the Bella Coola towards Raven.

The first Raven, to whom *Älquntäm* granted such power, is not regarded as a bird, but essentially as a superman, with the kindly characteristics of a human being, and the weakness of a conceited individual who is always trying to display his prowess. The ordinary word used for a raven is *qwaz*, but this first Raven is properly referred to by his titles as chief, *Nemaktile*; *Ämaxsimdemtx*, "The Light-Bringer"; *Kilalaxmaxmx*, "The Wise One"; *Na'awaalhamnaix*, "The Widower";* *Xaxqmaxmx alälält qvaz*, "The Unknower of Light";* *Xaz dzwatile*, *Xwai-älz*, and *Xwai*. The Bella Coola do not explain what happened to this first *Nemaktile*; he appears to have dropped out of existence, and his power has not been transmitted to his descendants, the ravens of today. They are regarded as birds, with but the slightest trace of their ancestor's greatness. The Bella Coola know of the beliefs of the Kitkatla concerning Raven, and say that in the north he is esteemed only a little less than the supreme deity himself. But in Bella Coola the exploits of Raven are always considered to be due to the power given him by *Älquntäm*, whose assistant he was, although he delighted to show his own prowess by outwitting his maker.

*Because he is supposed to have widowed divers for several of the first settlers.
*Owing to the manner in which Raven is supposed to have unveiled the sun.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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773 ago the tide came further up the rivers than at present and did
823 not recede so far. This statement was made by an intelligent old man who said that the change had taken place during his own life-time.

773 One of Raven's most important alterations to *Älquntăm*'s
833 intentions was with regard to the sexual act.

> In the beginning of time, the organs of women were on the forehead, those of men on the palm of the hand, and intercourse was effected by a man rubbing his hand across a woman's brow. Raven feared that children would not result from this practice and accordingly altered the organs of both sexes to their present positions. In order to teach mankind the sexual act he then chose a woman and held intercourse with her, telling her that if the practice were carried out secretly and vigorously a child would be born. And nine months later the woman gave birth to an infant. Raven told the first inhabitants of the world that he wished them to have issue; they consequently held intercourse frequently and begat many children until their descendants filled the Bella Coola valley.

The attitude of the Bella Coola towards this story is identical with their beliefs concerning Raven as the cause of death.

"Yes," they say, as they repeat the above story in answer to a question, "Raven taught our ancestors how to have children."

773 One side of their nature implicitly believes any story handed
[183] down from the distant past, but few today are sufficiently naïve actually to credit it. The more sophisticated frankly disbelieve, or pretend to do so. Doubt also exists with regard to
[129] Raven as originator of linguistic differences. The Bella Coola state that *Älquntăm* intended only one language for the whole world, but Raven thought that this would lead to trouble and used his power to teach the ancestors of every tribe their special speech.

Many inventions and beliefs are attributed to Raven without any accompanying myth. It is said that almost all geo-
[103] graphical names are those bestowed by him on places reached in his travels. It was Raven who taught men how to bait
[226] hooks on long lines to catch black cod; it was Raven who first

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CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Ancestral Family—The Village Community—The Family—Kinship Terms—Slaves

AS in other communities, the social, religious, and economic aspects of Bella Coola life are interdependent, but there is an added complexity in the influence of mythological concepts. This not only complicates investigation in the field, but it also renders a logical description of their customs difficult. Some reference to practices recorded in detail in later chapters is unavoidable.

In many communities, ethnologists have been able to begin with the social organization of the people. Among the Bella Coola, this is impossible, since their religious beliefs colour every aspect of their life, and these must be understood by anyone who wishes to comprehend their culture as a whole. In this chapter, too, it is necessary to commence with a description of that aspect of mythology which serves as the cohesive bond to one of the social units, the ancestral family.

Ancestral Family

As recorded in the last chapter, it is believed that in the beginning of time *Alquntâm* caused the first men and women to be created in his house above and sent them down to populate the earth. They came in groups of two, three, four, or more, brothers and sisters, or more rarely man and wife, to different parts of the Bella Coola valley. They brought with them tools, houses, clothing, even sustenance in the shape of fish and animals. More important, from the point of view of social organization, they brought with them names and ceremonial prerogatives. In fact, the Bella Coola believe that their culture was created by *Alquntâm* in the distant past, and has not been the result of slow growth. It is true that there

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773 have been many changes. Raven, the culture hero, taught
829 the early settlers many useful arts, and they were themselves so powerful that they were able to create ceremonial and other prerogatives in a manner impossible to their descendants. Moreover, the people realize that they have been influenced by neighbouring tribes since that time, but in spite of these additions, they believe that their life is patterned on that of their earliest forbears.

[181] As a group, the Bella Coola are philosophers. They demand a reason for everything, though once a reason has been given, and accepted, they think no more about the matter. The elaboration of Bella Coola mythology may be due in part to their desire to explain their social organization; but without question these myths, now accepted as facts, have had a great influence on the lives of the people. In fact the social structure of the tribe has tended to conform to the myths.

621 It is believed that each group of first people formed a village
773 community, and pre-empted hunting-grounds in the vicinity. [361] These usually consisted of small valleys opening from the main Bella Coola River, tracts which could thus be easily defined. [224] Each group also took possession of a suitable part of the river for a salmon-weir, or, if located on the coast, a convenient place for an ocean fish-trap. In course of time the first people married, of necessity with members of other villages. According [591] to mythology, and equally according to modern practice, the women usually moved to the villages of their husbands. When 773 a child was born, it naturally grew up to share in the hunting-grounds of its father's village. Moreover, the father was able to bestow on his child various ceremonial dances; the concepts of some he had brought with him from above, others he had formulated on this earth. It is assumed that all the first people were mighty chiefs, able to initiate rites in a way that few modern men have been able to equal. But the mothers of these children, the first born on this earth, did not surrender the privileges of their own villages at marriage. Consequently, their children were of almost as much interest to the brothers

b 56 Dorsett E-5 (502-1504)948
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the Germans it would have been moral and proper according to Bella Coola ethics, but to take land was unheard of.

Since land is only valued for hunting or collecting purposes, it is not divided into small areas. Any man can build his house as will near the village. It is said that at Kitlobe the crab-apple trees are the property of different ancestral families, themselves members of different tribes, but this is unknown in Bella Coola. It may be mentioned that the Bella Coola somewhat naively assume that all other coastal tribes have ancestral families similar to their own, although they recognize that some of them also have a clan system which has no counterpart in their social organization. Since the construction of the tribe on a small reserve and the beginning of agriculture, a system of individual ownership of cultivated land has sprung up. It is realized that if a man clears and cultivates a field, the produce is his own, and he can will this land to whomsoever he pleases. Likewise a man who rings a tree to kill it for firewood is the sole owner. The Bella Coola regard uncultivated land in the reserve as being at the disposal of anyone, a concept which appears not to have been taught them by any white administrator. Its origin seems rather to lie in the old belief that any unoccupied land, far removed from a village, can be used by anyone. It is recognized that the reserve cannot be considered as a *sal'alem* belonging to any ancestral group, hence it is free to all. One corner of it, however, includes the lower part of a side-valley formerly used by the people of *Tsmusil*. An old man, whose ancestral family lived in that village for generations, has set his bear-traps in this corner of the reserve for a number of years without interference from other hunters, who go far afield with their traps. Even within the limits of the reserve it is felt that this man has the prime right to that area for the use of himself and his family.

Theoretically an ancestral family may die out. Several instances were received of old men who, believing themselves to be the sole survivors of their family, bequeathed their names

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names to their dog, and had distributed presents to validate the bestowal. Consequently, the animal is a chief (see Plate 231 [illegible] can do as he likes. When it dies it will be mourned 552 as a chief. Moreover, a number of people have returned the 622 presents which they received at the time the dog was made a 766 chief, and this money is kept by the woman and her husband, to be used when they perform the rite of mourning for the dog at death.

When this is possible, in the present degenerate days, it is 552* not difficult to understand how, formerly, a great chief felt 622 himself above the restrictions that hindered lesser men. The [154] last great Bella Coola chief was *Putlo*, who died between 1850 and 1880. His influence and power were so great that he was a virtual ruler, during anything. If he requested a young man to take his food box home and the youth was slow to obey, *Putlo* had no hesitation in killing him on the spot. Such great power, though unusual, is intelligible to the Bella Coola, since *Putlo* gave far more potlatches than any of his contemporaries. Other chiefs have been known to attempt a similar arbitrary use of power, but have failed, since their prestige was not great enough to justify it. The fame of a mighty chief spreads up [124] and down the coast, and protects him and the members of his family from being ambushed and slain in any sporadic foray. During an actual fight, however, a chief had to take [124] his chances with the rest, but the comparative immunity was a great advantage.

The Bella Coola recognize the fundamental difference 171 between their own concepts about chieftainship and those of 556* other coastal tribes with whom they come in contact. This 622 point was mentioned in the course of conversation by several 829* men. The most powerful chief known to them was Tsilsam, who, they say, was virtual monarch of the Kitkatla. None of his subjects could go hunting without his permission, and he had rights to a certain share of their booty. At any ceremony presents had first to be given to him, and if he were slighted in this respect, he would kill the offender. It is be-

[Jour. Am. Fl., p 96 (c) - Analyst]

formal that all the Kitkatla chiefs were powerful, but Tsibasa was the greatest of all. It is said that one of his prerogatives was to exercise *jus primae noctis* whenever a Kitkatla was married. Without question, tales of this chief's prowess have become exaggerated in transmission, none the less they show that the Bella Coola realize the great importance of the northern chiefs. Concerning their nearer neighbours, the Bella Bella, the Bella Coola understand the way in which the members of a family combine to help their chief in the giving of presents. They say that the Bella Bella consider the Bella Coola practice of each one endeavouring to make himself a chief to be foolish in the extreme. Such is also said to be the opinion among the Kwakiutl, who support their contention that in Bella Coola all are chiefs, from the fact that having eaten under the mats of all, whereas in Fort Rupert, their home, such occurs only beneath the mats of chiefs.

Corresponding to the extreme paucity of functions possessed by Bella Coola chiefs, their prerogatives are likewise scanty. Indeed, they take their validated mats only during certain rites of the secret society connected with chiefs, as potlatches, and at ceremonial meals. These last occur whenever a deer or seal is killed, the latter is considered a great delicacy.[1] Anyone can kill a seal, but it would be unbecoming for a Bella Coola to share its flesh with his immediate family only. The animal is cleaned, the hole made by bullet or spear carefully plugged, and the carcass boiled whole in a large box. Meanwhile a herald (1, p. 144) summons the chiefs to the house where the successful hunter lives. If the meal is to consist merely of one small seal, only a few chiefs are invited, those of greatest influence through their possession of "young" mats. When several seals have been killed, the number invited is correspondingly larger, but no woman may partake unless she owns

[1] This is said to have been a personal prerogative, not shared by all chiefs, and requiring validation by valuable presents.

[2] Most mats of the rite described in this paragraph were in the present time. In fact, the observation of seal meat by chiefs alone was discontinued towards the close of the last century.

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THE PROFESSION OF CARPENTER

As with singers, there are many carpenters who ply their trade without the advantage of an ancestral prerogative. They, also, may be expert and receive credit for their skill, but they can never achieve quite the distinction that comes to a man who has been made a carpenter by the distribution of presents. The latter may be as clumsy with tools that no one would ever trust him to make a canoe, or even a mask; but he is, socially, a carpenter, whereas a skilled artisan lacking a prerogative is admired for his ability but has no foundation of social esteem. In transmitting a professional carpenter's name, however, an effort is always made to give it to a youth with a bent in that direction.

The most esteemed carpenters are those who can make canoes, a trade which requires no special prerogative. In the beginning of time, Yaaitmut was the canoe-maker *par excellence*; he assisted many of the first people, and no one can have a professional prerogative as carpenter unless this supernatural being appears in his ancestral myth. The Bella Coola ascribe the skill of the Bella Bella in carpentry to the fact that Yaaitmut married a Bella Bella woman in the early period of the world and that many of that tribe are his descendants. In the old days, before the coming of the white men, carpenters were always respected as esteemed members of the community. Chiefs always cared for them, and they received abundant food at every ceremonial. None the less, they were not wealthy, and only in recent years, since the Bella Coola have realized the value put upon good craftsmanship by the white men, has it become customary to give valuable presents to carpenters. Ceremonially, they have considerable influence, since the carpenter who makes a mask usually decides who shall wear it and takes charge of the fitting and adjustment. He is also held responsible for any accident such as its falling when in use or for mechanical defects.

1:Mc Dermith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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as at that time it was all semi-darkness, faintly illuminated by what resembled pale moonlight. He remembered that he had seen the sun in *Alqunstin's* house, enclosed in a kind of a sack, and he determined to steal it. So he again assumed the form of a raven and flew back aloft. Without allowing himself to be seen, he changed himself into a grain of dust and placed himself in a cup from which *Alqunstin's* daughter, *Sigmaa·a*, was about to drink. Noticing the speck of dirt, she blew it away. Then he changed to a hemlock needle, floating on the surface of the liquid, but she lifted it off. Undiscouraged, Raven became small which she drank down, enabling him to enter her body. *Sigmaa·a* was greatly surprised to find herself pregnant, and so was her father. In course of time a boy was born, really Raven, though she knew it not. He grew with phenomenal rapidity, and within a few weeks was crawling around on the floor and, like a spoilt child, crying for playthings. Whatever his mother or grandmother gave him, he threw aside after a few minutes and cried the more; he was a fractious child. Looking up, Raven perceived to notice for the first time the sun, dimly gleaming from within its container as it hung from the roof of his grandfather's house. He cried and cried, almost choking himself; nothing would satisfy him, so at last his indulgent grandfather gave him the shining object though he was careful to seal the door with soft bark. The happy child rolled the dimly glowing ball around on the soft covering for some time, but when the door was opened, he crawled outside with it, threw the container against the doorpost, assumed raven form once more, and flew away, croaking derisively. Thus human beings received the boon of sunlight. Raven flew back to earth and again became *Kâsilâs*.

539*

SECOND ORIGIN MYTH OF *Tsesâ'i*"

Long, long ago, there were no people on this earth; they were all in *Nuwuk·a* where different languages were made. Then *Alqunstin* gave life to the occupants of his house and sent them down to earth. A man, *Kulkulâm*, stretched from the land above to this world, and down this crossed five brothers, *Xemxem*, *Tîyaâ'·mut*, *Pempâlis*, *Wîtâlas*, and *Nuklâlis*. *Pempâlis*, who was to part as eagle, brought with him an obsidian and a hammer for driving stakes used for blankets rests, and *Xemxem* and *Tîyaâ'·mut* brought a painted mat which they used as ceremonial gatherings. About the same time four sisters came to earth as Hare, for so the men. Their names were *Wîtâlat*, who was without legs; *Tsesâlâs*; *Skumâlgumâ·a*; and *Nuklemâ·ulâtsâlâs*. *Pempâlis* exerted his power of thought to make them come to Bella Coola. The four

[1244]

*Related by Captain Schooner.

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[534] [532] before he came to this world. It was a large pole and stood across the sidewalk from the house, not being pierced by the doorway. At the base was a grizzly bear, with paws wrapped around it as if desirous of climbing after the food which could be seen higher up. Immediately above the bear was an eagle's nest with four fledglings standing amid their broken eggshells and craning their necks eagerly upwards to greet the mother eagle flying back with a salmon. At the top of the pole was a bird, *Tsayemalk*, representing the contrivance in which the sun was enshrined; it was this that Raven broke to release light to mortals. The name of the pole was *Ki-ikkaut*.[a]

[531] The names mentioned in this myth are still in use. *Kimilkut* was the inventor of it; her sound song deals with *Omaiut* a soul, since the unborn enter Bella Coola River in hopes of reaching this place, whence are used in the decorations of her house. The name *Snaluyung*[b] varies, it becomes *Nikaung*[c] when applied to a youth, and *Nikaung*[d] as a for a girl.

FOURTH INDIAN MYTH OF *Sinaut*[e]

[534] Long, long ago there was in a mysterious place far to the east and far above this world, a very large house, *Nalaklakaut*, in which dwelt together all people, Bella Coola, Bella Bella, Carriers, and the rest. In it there lived too, all kinds of birds, including the thrush who taught each to sing. [529] The chief of the house, *Sinaut* by name, lived there too and gave to each tribe its special language. One day he decided to visit the earth, and dived from his house downwards, becoming the sun. In this guise he came to earth on Mount *Nayo*, near Dean, where he became a man and built for himself a house which was a copy of *Nalaklakaut*, and to which he gave the same name. *Sinaut* became prosperous and gave many potlatches.

FRAGMENT OF A *Deadly of canoe myth*[f]

In the beginning of time, *Hyaemlem*, in guise of the sun, was down to earth a number of brothers with their one sister. Their names have been forgotten except that of the eldest son, *Talalakaula*, who had brought with him a beaver as provender. He released the animal, which made

[534 535]

[a] It is commonly the case, there is no connection between this totem-pole and the adventures of *Sinaut*. The person using this name has the right to use these designs as a part of his myth, usually as the right to narrate the adventures of the particular lineage to him.

[b] Fragmentary version, unknown unrecorded.

[c] Related by Indian Mandy.

Library Research R-5 (1922-1924)548
NEA Bellevue NEA

their craft and set out on foot along the overland path to the head of South Bentinck Arm.

Midway along this trail the travellers saw a house, called *Tsitsaalut* because it could lengthen itself at will. From this supernatural sight each of the five became a shaman. This house was a replica of the one above to which mankind was made and, like it, contained many rooms, in each of which lived an individual speaking a different language. *Ki'imlaxa* failed to understand them and in his annoyance cursed the speakers, who fled to different parts of the coast where each remained and perpetuated his own language. This is why the various coastal tribes have their own tongues; if *Ki'imlaxa* had been able to understand them in *Tsitsaalut* there would be no diversity of speech now.

Various houses were taking place in the rooms within the house. There was a constant din from the large whistles used to sound ceremonial which sounded all over the world and were continually answered by Echo. Only at this place and at *Nanqkiit* did Echo appear to the four people; hence only the descendants of *Ki'imlaxa* and of the *Nanqkiit* people have the right to portray him in their dances. *Boas*'Shaman (II, p. 6) exists near the door; when we has she called out, the sound whistles become about as if in fear.

Continuing their journey the travellers reached *Tlā'ōs*, at the head of South Bentinck Arm, where a solitary man, *Nanqwenā*, was living. At this place *Tsitsaalitsaalut* gave birth to Raven, who was born as a boy with the legs of a raven. *Ki'imlaxa* named him *qāqōlaxwagwilīlas*. After a short sojourn at *Tlā'ōs* they ascended the river, and presently *Ki'imlaxa* saw a female grizzly bear, whom he also invited to join the party as his sister. The bear accepted and he endeavoured to change the creature to a woman. He had his success with the paws and face, that is why these parts of a bear are similar to those of men at the present day, but the bear's hairy hide dulled his efforts and in disgust he told it to run away. Before banishing it, to hide the animal always show a friendly disposition to human beings, therefore grizzly bears at *Tlā'ōs* have never been known to attack a person. The party proceeded up the river to *Mount Sagi'*, where *Ki'imlaxa* found a repository (II, p. 6) through the discovery of which he became a Cannibal with the name *Sasalā'ōs* and no ought no brothers. From this point they returned to *Tlā'ōs*, where they settled permanently.

Many of the names which occur in this myth are still in use. Mrs. Edenso's designation as chief is *Tsitsaalitsaalut*, a name that can be used by either men or women; in the former case the suffix *-yaxa* is

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THREE ORIGIN MYTHS OF THE [illegible]*

534

Long, long ago, when the first people came to earth it was very different from now. There were no rivers on the mountains, all were bare and hard like rock and fatter than at present. There was no sun, since it was contained in a receptacle, a light container, within *Algunitse*'s house. Raven desired to get the sun for this world, so he went to the house and asked *Algunitse* for it. The supreme being refused and allowed Raven only to play with it on the floor. Raven, not only to be satisfied with this, waited his opportunity to open the door and threw out the sun, breaking the container as he did so. In this way it was obtained for mankind.

Since this time *Algunitse* was down to the head of Rivers Inlet a man, *Kaxpaiklakum*, and a woman, *Nuqkinqutlus*. At this time the only clothing worn was made of yellow cedar-bark and animal skins. The couple began children, who in turn married and had offspring, but *Kaxpaiklakum* did not grow old. Near the settlement there was a lake, on the shore of which the grandchildren often played, in spite of constant danger from a *q!amxit* which lived in it, and which had, in fact, caused several victims. This *q!amxit* was a creature as big as a house, which could rise at will to the water as will and was able to suck in its victims through its mouth-door. *Kaxpaiklakum* realized that *Algunitse* had given him power to slay this evil monster. Accordingly, he boldly entered the water and succeeded in passing into the interior of the beast through an opening in the side; even he would have perished if he had read the door-door, which was likewise the mouth. Inside was a chief, whose name was *Q!amxit*, like that of his house, he wore a huge hat with animals running around the brim. *Kaxpaiklakum* asked *Q!amxit* whence he had obtained all the many wonderful things hanging on the wall.

"If you are brave," the chief replied, "you will be able to get not only my possessions, but my house and my name as well."

So it transpired. *Kaxpaiklakum* consented to come time to *Q!amxit*'s house and removed many wonderful paintings on its walls, then summoned the people to come and see them. Four times he did this, using the house for his particulars, then he left.

He arrived on the north shore of North Bentinck Arm where two sticks came to hand. So he corralled a seven stalked along the road before him, carrying a copper in each hand and rolling out the road he slowly followed. On the site selected he built a house, Unidentified, so large that the front door was invisible from the back-room. Within there lived the ancestors of the different named tribes: Rivers Inlet Kwakiutl Indians, Bella Bella people, Bella Coola, Kwaiquiti, and Bella Coola, each group of which used to [illegible].

*Related by Robert Hunt.

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NES Bellacoola NES

special cups of whistle. Everybody remained in this house until he had given four potlatches. Then he removed to *Ape'i*, near *Tā'ie* River on South Bentinck Arm. The house still stands there, but it has become an island around which the canoes move whenever a hostile raiding party is approaching, so as to conceal from them their objective.

From their long residence in this house *Tā'ie* people understand the language of their Bella Bella, Rivers Inlet, and other coastal neighbours better than do the Bella Coola.

EMERGENCE OF THE PEOPLE FROM THE WATER OF *Tā'ie*[29]

Among the first people sent down to earth were four who landed at the river *Tsaiq*, on the mainland opposite Port Rupert. Their names were *Nūtsxemāiēq*, a man who became the leader of the group; *Nayā'ōlis*, a woman; *Ānaēkmālēm*, a man; and another woman, *Sxemmāl-mālis*. They met a wasp, which helped them by pointing out the proper road to follow and by killing evil things which barred their path. With this assistance they were able to reach *Tā'ie*, where they settled and where *Nūtsxemāiēq* plucked a number of twigs from the branches of a spruce tree over the water. These twigs became the people over whom he was chief.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nuāsē*[30]

In the beginning of time there came down to Mount *Saaiq*, near the mouth of the Dean River, two brothers, *Lemexe* and *Sīnaqaē*, their sister *Qōlēm*, and their foster-father *Qaqā'ōl*. *Lemexe* came as an eagle, but at once assumed human form; apparently the others had always been human. They moved down, and formed a settlement at *Nuāsē*, near the mouth of the Dean River. *Lemexe* had brought with him as a present from *Alqunthlon*, some chitons, called by their supernatural name, *Alqunthlon-a*, which he threw into the water. They increased rapidly and became the ancestors of all the chitons at *Kimsquit*. Thus provided with food, the brothers prospered so that they were able to give many potlatches. In course of time *Qōlēm* was married to *Nuāsēla*, a chief who had come to earth on the upper Dean River.

In one of their potlatches *Sīnaqaē* performed a *Saiyāhwe* dance, as *Alqunthlon* had instructed him to do before leaving *Nuāsē'a*. Valuable

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[29] Supplementary version, obtained by Miss Deland.

[30] Another version see Boas, p. 65. It was impossible to obtain this myth from any of the descendants of *Nuāsēla*; it is unlikely that the above is more than an outline.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)5948
NEA Bellacoola NEA

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Ăxăla*[a]

534*

In the beginning of time *Hąmaxtsa* went down to *Ăxăla*, Salmon House on the Dean River, *Nuhkila*, his younger brother *Tsaqăc*, and their sister *Awalkimdăs*, "Box," so named from a supernatural box in the land above. *Tsaqăc* brought a cariboo with him, and released it on earth.[b] With these people came as herald, The Wasp of Heaven, who later summoned human form and guided them. *Tsaqăc* at once moved inland to the country of the Carrier Indians, where he remained,[c] taking the adopted name *Ăqăc*.

Nuhkila, unprovided with a house or clothing, was so lonely and unhappy that for four days he lay hungry, inert and despondent, alone with his sister. *Hąmaxtsa* had promised to provide for his welfare, and, four days after *Nuhkila*'s landing, sent down the four supernatural carpenters to help him. *Talăkimaw* at once cheered his drooping spirits by building him a house, which was a replica of *Nuxwit'a* itself. *Nuhkila* asked the third carpenter, *Mălăkăltsuxuł*, to provide him with food, and the latter, obedient to *Hąmaxtsa*'s instructions, whittled a small-head salmon from maple wood and put it into the river. The fish came to life, swam, and jumped for a short time, but soon died. The carpenter tried several times with the same result. Then Raven appeared and gave him the bone which every small-head salmon has in the back of its neck. *Mălăkăltsuxuł* put this bone in one of his wooden models, and when he had thrown it in the river it swam strongly and survived. This fish multiplied so rapidly that *Nuhkila* and his sister were able to support themselves on this kind of salmon, which have been plentiful in the Dean River ever since. [525]

After a time *Nuhkila* decided to visit the people dwelling on the ocean. He asked *Mălăkăltsuxuł* for a canoe, and the carpenter made him one in the form of an enormous sunfish, that travelled without visible motive power. At that time the Dean River disappeared beneath a huge boulder a short distance above the sea, but the craft shattered the rock and opened a channel.[d]

At the mouth of the Dean River *Nuhkila* met *Kimsquit* and married his sister *Nelsut*, using at this ceremony a wordless marriage song given him by *Hąmaxtsa*. They had many children and ever since that time there have been intermarriages and friendly relations between the people of Salmon House and Kimsquit. [512]

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[a] Related by Jim Pollard, the earliest version of this myth see Boas, p. 66.

[b] The footprints are still to seen in the rocks near Salmon House.

[c] The obvious fact that the Carriers must already have been in the land does not strike the Bella Coola. They do not theorize on the subject, but if asked, reply that they too were sent down from above at the same time.

[d] The canyon on this river marks the site of the observation.

[524]

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Other people had come down to earth at the same time as Xaxe'a, and among them a man and his wife who had landed at the mouth of Gee Bay. They had two daughters who, walking one day at the head of the bay, were surprised to find a house. They looked in and saw a woman, so covered, and laughed heavily to find her seats of cotton wood. They kicked over the figure and the head fell into the fire and was burnt. Then they seated themselves in her place, worked diligently at the blanket and ate a large amount of the food. Towards dusk they put the figure back in place and hid themselves.

Soon Xaxe'a returned. He undressed the figure, called her a good wife, and thanked her for weaving so diligently and for having eaten so much of the food. Then he saw that she had burnt her head, and chided her, saying that she must take better care of herself. At this the two girls who were hiding burst out laughing and showed themselves. They suggested to Xaxe'a that he choose one of them for his wife; he agreed, selected the elder and married her. He built a house on a hilltop where they lived and to which he called people from far and near when he gave a potlatch.

Named Origin Myths

As already stated, many named names are believed to have come down from above with the first Bella Coola, or to have been created by them on this earth. In such cases, the named origin myth is the same as the unnamed myth. Theoretically, names of the same type can also be received through visions in which a beholder is given his new designation by some supernatural being, or takes it from the apparition. In either case, of course, it must be duly validated by the giving of presents. Only three myths were obtained which deal solely with the acquisition of a named prerogative. No doubt this is chiefly to be explained by the fact that most named rites have been derived from the Bella Bella.

THE ORIGIN OF THE *Named* NAME, *Qaxpaxuyē'xqilmut*[a]

About 1840, a party of Kimsit Indians[b] spent the winter in Bella Coola. Early in the spring one of them broke his leg on

[a] Related by Joshua Moody.

[b] It was impossible to identify this tribe. According to the Bella Coola they are also in the Cowlitz, but have adopted the use of totem poles, border dances

L 96 Swanton R-9 (1912-1914) 1948
NBS Bulletin 30B

that he was unable to return home. A young Bella Coola woman charitably took the injured man into her house, but though she tended him with care, the injury did not heal properly, and he was crippled for life. He used to work around the house at light chores, but was unable to perform any hard work, and was virtually adopted into the family, though, lacking land in Bella Coola, he could never acquire any real status there. After remaining for more than five years the cripple became ill, and realized that he was about to die. In gratitude to the woman who had sheltered him, he asked her to use his *xaaē* name, *Sparpaxaē-mqalmaxt*, for one of her children, if she ever had any. Soon afterwards, the stranger died. The woman's family paid for his burial, and it was recognized that the name, with myth attached, belonged to them. In later years it was duly validated with presents at a potlatch, for the benefit of her son from whom this account was obtained.

The myth is as follows:

Long, long ago, a number of the sons of chiefs were playing on the shore of Owen Lake, not far from a village. One of them, happening to look upwards, was surprised to see drifting down from a great height a spruce, one of the long feathers which grow on the upper leg of an eagle. They idly wondered who would get it, and pressed close together, ready to struggle, boy-like, for the prize, but it eluded their outstretched hands, and fell on the head of one of the boys. Then, to the amazement of all, he was lifted from the ground, as if the feather had been a magnet drawing him aloft. One of his friends seized his ankles and tried to pull him down, but in vain; moreover, he found that he could not release his grasp. A third had grasped the feet of the would-be rescuer, but he, too, was lifted from the ground. One after another tried to pull down his friends, but none could do so, until finally all the lads were drawn aloft by the feather, each holding the legs of the one above him. Nothing was ever heard of their fate.

A few years later the father of the boy on whom the feather had fallen gave a potlatch, at which he used this event as a name-theme for one of his surviving children. A mask representing the sun was used in the belief that this supernatural being alone could have caused such an event, and the name transmitted through intermarriage with the coastal people of the Dean River. This house is said to be in the north of Owen Lake, but, as no Bella Coola has visited them, their reliability can be placed on this occasion

57/ [58] Confidently believing that he has descended from ancestors who came to this earth in the beginning of time, a Bella Coola wishes to have his children firmly established in the path of his forbears. This can be accomplished only with the aid of a suitable mother. It follows that marriage is not primarily a matter of affection, but of the ancestral eligibility of the contracting parties.

CHOICE OF WIFE

58 [59] Since the initiative for marriage is taken by the men in almost all cases, it will be convenient and proper to describe the factors which enter into the search for a wife, remembering that the concerns govern the decision of the woman and her relatives. The choice of the woman who is to be the mother of the children who will carry on the traditions of the ancestral family is a matter of too great importance to be entrusted to any young person. Accordingly, while their son is yet a child, his parents often discuss who would be a suitable wife for him. They view the matter from a strictly business standpoint. 59/ Proud of their own ancient lineage, they would not demean themselves by allowing their son to marry a girl who could not trace her ancestry back to the first people, or with one whose forbears had disgraced themselves by marriage with slaves. Instead, it is a matter of pride for parents to have as daughter-in-law the child of a powerful chief. Nor can they choose a 60/ woman too closely related to their son. Marriage with a sister, an aunt, a niece, or any first cousin is strictly prohibited. No reason for these laws could be obtained; the Bella Coola consider that it would be "indecent" or unclean so to marry, but have theorized no further about the matter. An adopted child is regarded in the same light as an own child. The Bella Coola know, and are amused by, the regulation of marriage according to clans among the northern tribes, but practise nothing of the same nature themselves. In fact, marriages usually take place among those who are descended from one ancestor and who have, accordingly, the same crest, though the significance

61/ [62] 62/ [63]

[illegible] 764
[illegible] 764
[illegible] 529

[illegible] 766

[illegible] 762
[illegible] 775]

[illegible] 777
[illegible] 764

[illegible]

[illegible] or graves, or bear within the memory of elderly people.

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NEA Bellacoola NEA

539 775 hurry back. After so short a visit as they thought polite, they asked to be ferried back across the river and returned their steps to the cave where they had slept the previous night. It was dusk by this time and they lay down to sleep. During the night the cave returned on itself once more, and in the morning they were delighted to find themselves in the mountains above the Dean River.

This was the first time that anyone had penetrated to the land of ghosts, and the friends of the four brothers were intensely interested in the account of their experiences. It was October at the time, but they explained that it was late winter in the land below. No one knows why or how the four brothers had received the power to pass into the land of ghosts, although it is assumed that *Algunkw* must have granted them the boon.

A Kitkata Story of a Descent to the Land of Ghosts

177 539 775 The following story was related by an elderly man who had heard it about ten years previously from three Christian Kitkata who had been his fellow-passengers on a steamship between Vancouver and Bella Coola. It is not a Bella Coola story, although it has been circulated among members of the tribe as an interesting tale. The facts recorded in it do not agree entirely with their beliefs, but that is a matter of no [829] consequence to the Bella Coola who, having their own knowledge, consider it quite natural that the other tribes should have other concepts.

539 775 Almost one year before the story was told, a Kitkata woman had died, leaving her husband and one grown-up daughter to mourn her. The husband refused to be comforted, and used to fall into a paroxysm of weeping whenever he saw any of his wife's clothing or goods. About a week after her funeral he took her clothing to the cemetery intending to burn it, but instead sat down on the ground to weep. Presently he noticed a passage beside him, down which he crawled until he came to a flat, rich land more prosperous than this world, where he wandered along aimlessly till he heard the sound of singing and hid himself behind a clump of bushes. There seemed to be five or six groups of people in different sections of the country, and the song was taken up in succession by each group. When he had remained in his hiding-place for some time, two people in new, white clothes passed so close to him that he could hear the rustling of their garments. He recognized one of the

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NEA Bellacoola NEB

sively when the villages in which the dances are taking place are adjacent or separated by such a short distance that envoys cannot meet en route.

A word may be said about the attitude of the Bella Coola to the dances of other coastal tribes. They know that the Bella Bella, Rivers Inlet, Kwakiutl, and Kitkatla people have *hamats'a* societies, but until recently their members were considered to be uninitiated, as Bella Coola were when they visited foreign tribes.[1] A few years ago the Bella Coola, Bella Bella, and Rivers Inlet people decided that their rites were sufficiently akin to permit membership in one tribe to carry with it membership in the others.

"We have now one repository," they say.

This development is due to ease of communication and diminution of population in the three tribes. None the less, the Bella Coola recognize differences between their own rites and those of their neighbours. They say that no other tribe has repositories; also that in the other tribes the *hamats'a* society is more intimately connected with the chiefs, in fact, that in Bella Bella and Fort Rupert the Cannibals are the chiefs, whereas in Bella Coola even a poor man, uninfluential in every other respect, can be one.

Theorization is out of place in a descriptive monograph such as this, but the writer gives it as his personal opinion that the Bella Coola have adopted much, if not all, of the *hamats'a* ceremonial from other coastal tribes, though they have profoundly altered it in respect to certain ancient beliefs connected with localized guardian spirits and the patrons of ancestral families. He further believes that it will be found that this Bella Coola technique has in its turn affected the Bella Bella and Rivers Inlet Indians. There seems little doubt that the Bella Coola are correct in saying that the society is more important among them than among their neighbours, and the writer finds that dances and rituals of different types have certainly been adapted to the *hamats'a* pattern of the Bella Coola.

[1] Except a few individuals who had inherited foreign prerogatives.

2: McDougall E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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CHAPTER VI

THE MAN HIMSELF

Physique — Character

Physique

142 IN central British Columbia there are two types of Indian; 144 one represented by the Carriers and Chilkotin of the interior, the other, by the coastal peoples. The first are relatively slight of build with graceful carriage, and thin, rather delicate-featured faces. The younger people, particularly, are lithe and handsome, resembling bronze statues. On the other hand, individuals of the second type are characterized by stocky, heavy physique, with thick-set, powerful bodies, muscular arms and legs; their faces have wide mouths and prominent cheek-bones and noses (see Plate 13). Undoubtedly the Bella Coola belong with these latter.[1] No measurements were taken to substantiate this statement, but the general affinities of the tribe are obvious. Stature, build, physiognomy, and especially that intangible impression of heaviness, unite to demonstrate even to one with slight knowledge of British Columbia Indians that he is dealing with a people who are predominantly of the coastal type. Of course there are individuals of the interior type, but they are decidedly in the minority (see Plates 14 and 15). The Bella Coola claim that they can [824] distinguish a coastal man from one of the interior people, and that every coastal tribe has its own peculiarities sufficiently marked to be recognizable on sight. Probably no white observer can make this fine distinction, though the difference between the two main types is clearly apparent.

142 Judged by white standards the Bella Coola are far from 145 prepossessing in appearance. Even the children are plain and stolid, with little if any of the grace and appeal of childhood.

[1] Cf. Boas, p. 36.